

W E L L I N G T O N
U R B A N D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L
(SOMERSET)

A N N U A L R E P O R T

- of the -

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year 1972

BY

DR. HUGH MORRISON

M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

WELLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (SOMERSET)

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR 1972

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1972

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To:

THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
WELLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my report for 1972. This follows the usual lines and is drawn up in accordance with Department of Health and Social Security instructions. Vital statistics of the year for the urban district were satisfactory and the prevalence of infectious disease was extremely low. Progress on the renewal of the sewerage system for the town was very satisfactory and when this comes to completion there will be a great improvement to this essential service. The worst of the sub-standard housing conditions have been eliminated in Wellington over the years but much remains to be done in this field.

Mr. Clarkson, your Public Health Inspector, contributes a very full account of the sanitary and environmental matters that he has had to deal with. I should like to thank him for his help.

I wish to thank also the Members of the Council, the Clerk and officials of other departments for their willing assistance and co-operation at all times.

I am

Your obedient servant,

HUGH MORRISON.

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WELLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT

Area (in acres)	2,186
Estimate of Resident Population, mid-year 1972	9,510
Census Population 1971	9,353
Number of Inhabited Houses according to the Rate Book on 1st April, 1972	3,324
Rateable Value, 1st April, 1972	£327,753
Sum represented by a 1p Rate, 1st April, 1972	£3,154

EXTRACTS FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1972

1. Births.

(a) Live Births

	M.	F.	Total		
Legitimate	59	69	128	Crude birth rate	
Illegitimate	9	6	15	per 1,000 of the	
				estimated resident	
Totals:	68	75	143	population	15.0
Standardised Birth Rate, Wellington U.D.					16.7
Birth Rate, England and Wales					14.8
Percentage Illegitimate of Total Live Births					10.0

(b) Stillbirths

	Total	1
Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births -		
Wellington U.D.		7.0
England and Wales		12.0
Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population -		
Wellington U.D. ....		.11

2. Deaths.

(a) Total Deaths	141
Crude Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population	14.8
Standardised Death Rate, Wellington U.D.	10.8
Death Rate for England and Wales	12.1

(b) Maternal Mortality

Total maternal mortality from all causes	0
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(c) Infant Mortality

Deaths of infants under 1 year of age - Total	2
Death rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births -	
Wellington U.D.	14.0
England and Wales	17.0

(d) Deaths from Cancer (all ages) -

Total	28
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COMMENT ON VITAL STATISTICS

There has been a continued steady rise in population, the figure for 1972 of 9,510 being about 150 more than that of the previous year. The Birth Rate in Wellington was slightly higher than that of England and Wales as a whole, and the Death Rate definitely lower.

Infant Mortality which, in 1971, was nil, accounted for two deaths in 1972 but this is still below the general rate for the country.

In 1971 the percentage of illegitimate births was low, at 2%, but in 1972 the figure climbed to 8% of all live births. This is disturbing but, as is well known, the problem at the present time is not peculiar to Wellington.

Diseases of the heart and blood vessels were, as usual, responsible for the highest number of deaths. Many of these were in very old people who had had their normal term of life, but a substantial number of these deaths occur in middle age and represent the price we pay for our modern pattern of civilisation.

There were seven deaths from cancer of the lung, five in males and two in females, as compared with a total of four in 1971. This ghastly epidemic continues to extend its ravages in this country as is clearly shown by the following table:-

Deaths from Cancer of the Lung in England and Wales

1966	...	...	...	...	27,025
1967	...	...	...	...	28,250
1968	...	...	...	...	28,826
1969	...	...	...	...	29,768
1970	...	...	...	...	30,281
1971	...	...	...	...	30,746

CAUSES OF DEATHS DURING 1972

						Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Syphilitic disease	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Meningococcal Infections..	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...	-	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Buccal Cavity etc.	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Malignant Neoplasm, Oesophagus	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	...	...	...	...	...	4	1	5
Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine...	...	...	...	...	...	3	-	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	...	...	...	...	...	5	2	7
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	...	...	...	...	...	-	3	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	...	...	...	...	...	-	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Prostate	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Other Malignant Neoplasms	...	...	...	...	...	3	4	7
Benign and Unspecified Neoplasms	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Leukemia	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Diabetes Mellitus	...	...	...	...	...	-	1	1
Other endocrine etc, diseases...	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Other diseases of nervous system etc..	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Chronic rheumatic heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Hypertensive disease	...	...	...	...	...	5	4	9
Ischaemic heart disease...	...	...	...	...	...	13	20	33
Other forms of heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	4	8	12
Cerebrovascular disease...	...	...	...	...	...	2	17	19

						Male	Female	Total
Other diseases of circulatory system...	...	...	...	...	...	2	4	6
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	4	4	8
Bronchitis and Emphysema...	...	...	...	...	...	1	-	1
Asthma	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Other diseases of respiratory system...	...	...	...	...	...	-	2	2
Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	...	...	-	2	2
Intestinal obstruction and hernia	...	...	...	...	...	-	1	1
Other diseases of digestive system	...	...	...	...	...	2	4	6
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Nephritis and Nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	...	...	1	-	1
Other diseases, genito-urinary system..	...	...	...	...	...	-	1	1
Diseases of skin, subcutaneous tissue..	...	...	...	...	...	2	-	2
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion..	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Congenital Anomalies	...	...	...	...	...	-	1	1
Birth Injury, Difficult Labour, etc....	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
Other causes of Perinatal Mortality	...	...	...	...	...	1	-	1
Symptoms and ill-defined conditions	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	4
Motor Vehicle Accidents	...	...	...	...	...	1	-	1
Suicide and self-inflicted injuries	...	...	...	...	...	1	-	1
Homicide and operations of war...	...	...	...	...	...	-	-	-
All causes - Total:						56	85	141

GENERAL PROVISION OF THE HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Domiciliary Services

1. Medical and Nursing.

There are six general medical practitioners living and carrying on practice in the Urban District. There are adequate arrangements when required for domiciliary consultation with consultants serving the Taunton and West Somerset Area and, speaking generally, the practice of medicine in the district is of a high standard. The provisions for domiciliary nursing are also satisfactory. Arrangements for the provision of a Health Centre for the town were well advanced and it was hoped that this facility would become available in 1973.

2. Home Help Service.

This service, formerly administered by the County Health Department, has now passed to the control of the County Social Services Department. The administrative change will not mean any diminution in the number of calls on the services of the Home Helps or in the excellent work which they are carrying out; indeed the reverse may be the case. Health Visitors co-operate with Social Workers in the ascertainment of cases where help is required, and of course the local practitioners are also very much involved.

Hospital Services

These were still being provided according to the detailed account set out in the Report for 1971. The standard of treatment and care is high but the services are working under the handicap of having to use out-of-date and widely dispersed premises. These premises have been modified and improved over the years and many new treatment facilities have been made available, but the whole picture of hospital provision for this area will alter for the better when the new District General Hospital comes into operation.

A scheme for the carrying out of short-stay surgery at Bridgwater Hospital was inaugurated during 1971. This enables non-urgent cases of a relatively straightforward kind to be admitted, operated upon and discharged home to the care of the family doctor and district nurse all within the space of twenty-four hours. The scheme is operating with success and is having a valuable effect in reducing the waiting time for hospital treatment.

The greatest pressure on hospital services at the present time is probably produced by the increasing number of the elderly who are surviving to a greater age, and this is putting a heavy strain on the geriatric services.

The treatment of patients suffering from mental illness or mental handicap is being orientated to an even greater extent, in this as in other areas, towards the objective of care in the community rather than in hospital.

The two Wellington hospitals have continued to give invaluable service to the community. It now appears that ideas are changing as to the part which these smaller hospitals can play throughout the country in supplementing the work of the district general hospitals, and there seems every prospect that these hospitals in Wellington will continue to have a useful role in the future.

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES

1. Tuberculosis.

Clinics for patients suffering from this disease, and for the supervision of suspects and contacts, are held by the Chest Physicians at Musgrove Park Hospital. There is an After-Care Committee working in co-operation with these clinics. Mass Radiography has been carried out from time to time on various groups of the county population by a team working from a centre in Bristol, and Wellington is one of the districts which has had the benefit of this service.

2. Venereal Disease.

A combined clinic and treatment centre is carried out at Taunton and Somerset Hospital which caters for male and female patients of this and surrounding districts. These conditions which had, for some years, become rather uncommon in the district have been latterly showing a marked increase in prevalence; and this is in accordance with experience over the country as a whole. Gonorrhoea, one of the Venereal Diseases, is now the second most common infectious disease in the country, Measles being the commonest, and when Measles is brought under control by immunisation, Gonorrhoea is likely to take pride of place.

3. Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Acts are administered by the County Council under whose supervision are also the Health Visitors and Midwives practising within the area. There is an excellent Maternity Home in the Urban District of Wellington. Obstetric Consultants in Taunton are available for consultation with medical practitioners in the district. Abnormal and complicated cases are admitted for hospital treatment when necessary. Every case of Puerperal Pyrexia and Maternal Mortality is investigated by the medical staff of the County Council.

A valuable service is provided for premature infants. Small or premature babies unsuitable for nursing at home are admitted to a Special Care Unit at Musgrove Park Hospital, an ambulance equipped with an Oxygenaire incubator being sent to collect them from their homes. If the baby is deemed fit to be nursed at home, the district midwife can obtain advice and special equipment to help her with the management of the case.

A weekly clinic is held in the Youth Centre premises at which the Health Visitors are in attendance.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT 1948 - SECTION 47.

It was not found necessary during the year to take statutory action under this Act but some cases were dealt with informally.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The prevalence of infectious diseases was again very low. During the years there were the following notifications:-

Infective Jaundice	1
Measles	5

IMMUNISATION

It is considered that this form of protection against infectious disease is one of the most important activities in the field of protective medicine, and for this reason an up-to-date account of the procedures recommended and their timing is given in the table below. Notes on the various diseases against which the procedure is aimed were set out in the Annual Report for 1971 and it is thought unnecessary to repeat them on this occasion.

Arrangements for carrying out immunisation of children and young people are channelled through the County Council Computer which ensures that each individual is summoned at the appropriate time. Nearly all the actual immunising is done at sessions run by the family doctors in their surgeries. The percentage of children immunised in this area is now very high, but of course, this being a free country, it is still open to parents to neglect to have this matter seen to or to refuse to have anything to do with it. This happens relatively seldom, but we are anxious that it should not happen at all, because it is most important, for the individual and for the community at large, that the percentage of people immunised against these diseases, which formerly were responsible for so much misery and death, should be maintained at the highest possible level.

<u>AGE</u>	<u>VACCINE</u>
4 months	First diphtheria/whooping cough/tetanus and oral polio vaccine.
6 months	Second diphtheria/whooping cough/tetanus and oral polio vaccine.
12 months	Third diphtheria/whooping cough/tetanus and oral polio vaccine.
13 months - 2 years	Measles Vaccination.
4½ years	Diphtheria/tetanus (no whooping cough) and oral polio vaccine.
Over 11 years	B.C.G.
11 - 13 years	German Measles Immunisation (girls only).
14½ years	Oral polio vaccine. Tetanus toxoid.

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LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The Public Health Laboratory Service has a Laboratory in Taunton which undertakes the bacteriological examination of swabs, faeces, blood and sputum, etc. This service is available also to doctors practising in the district. Bacteriological and chemical analyses are also undertaken for the examination of milk, foods, water supplies and sewage effluents, etc. The co-operation and assistance of the Public Health Laboratory Staff in investigating all types of bacteriological and epidemiological problems is of the greatest value.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

Ambulance transport for all cases is the responsibility of the Somerset County Council. The main Ambulance Station and Control for the south-west of the county is situated at the entrance to Musgrove Park Hospital. The Ambulance Station serves a very wide area and at the 31st December the establishment of vehicles and staff was as follows:-

Vehicles	-	8 Ambulances 9 Sitting-case Ambulances 1 Control Vehicle
Staff	-	6 Sub-officers 4 Leading Ambulance-men 23 Driver-attendants 1 Trainee

All vehicles at this station are fitted with two-way radio communication.

MASS RADIOGRAPHY.

Regular sessions are held by the Regional Hospital Board Unit on one afternoon of each fortnight at the Longforth Road Car Park. Residents who wish to have a chest X-ray are welcomed at any one of these sessions and it is strongly urged that this facility should be freely used, especially by those over the age of 40 who would do well to have an annual chest X-ray.

There have been some suggestions of curtailing or even dispensing with the Mass Radiography Service and making use of hospital facilities for routine X-ray checks, but it is understood that there is no likelihood of any alteration in the service in the immediate future.

As an example of the type of work done in a unit of this sort the following table shows the findings obtained from routine examinations at the Wellington centre during 1972.

						<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Number examined	...	...	...	...	...	135	178	313
Abnormalities detected	...	...	...	...	...	4	3	7

Details of abnormalities detected -

Healed Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	-	1	1
Bronchial Carcinoma	...	...	1	-	1
Acquired Cardiac Lesion	...	...	-	1	1
Bronchiectasis	...	...	1	-	1
Pleural Effusion	1	-	1
Abnormality of the Diaphragm	-	1	1
Spontaneous Pneumothorax	1	-	1

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SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE AREA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS BY PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR - COMPLAINTS RECEIVED AND NOTICES SERVED.

(a) INSPECTIONS RE :-

Houses (Public Health Act)	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Houses (Housing Acts)	...	...	...	...	...	...	169
Houses (Improvement Grants)	...	...	...	...	...	...	139
Houses (Miscellaneous)	...	...	...	...	...	...	87
Drainage and drain tests	...	...	...	...	...	...	108
Water supplies	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Nuisances, accumulations, animals, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	34
Nuisances - pigeons	...	...	...	...	...	...	89
Vermin, insects, etc	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Noise nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Poisonous Waste Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Refuse storage, collection and disposal	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	111
Shops re meat	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
Shops re other foods	...	...	...	...	...	...	66
Other food premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Ice-Cream	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Clean Air Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Offices, Shops & Railway Premises Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
Caravan sites and vans	...	...	...	...	...	...	150
Shops Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Infectious disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Factories	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
Outworkers	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Rats and mice	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Petrol storage and testing of tanks	...	...	...	...	...	...	73
Pet Animals Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Swimming Pools	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
Miscellaneous inspections and visits	...	...	...	...	...	...	275
Interviews	...	...	...	...	...	...	574

(b) COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATED RE -

Housing defects and dampness	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Drainage	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Food supplies	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Water supplies	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Nuisances from smells, animals, accumulations	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Burning rubbish	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Rats and mice	...	...	...	...	...	...	47
Wasps, bees and other insects	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
Noise	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Clean Air	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Other nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	...	14

Total - 123

(c) NOTICES SERVED -

No Statutory Notices were served, but informal notices and letters requiring works were issued as follows:-

Public Health Act 1936	...	...	...	...	...	...	32
Housing Acts 1957/69	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Food Hygiene (General) Regulations	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Clean Air Act 1956	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Dark Smoke (Permitted Period) Regulations 1958	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Noise Abatement Act 1960	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Factory Act 1961	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Offices, Shops & Railway Premises Act 1963	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Shops Act 1950	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Petroleum (Consolidation) Act 1928	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Other nuisances/defects	...	...	...	...	...	...	2

Total - 90

WATER SUPPLY.

The district water supply is under the supervision of the West Somerset Water Board, and is supplied into the town's mains from two separate directions so that approximately half the premises are fed from Clatworthy Reservoir. This is a soft upland surface supply and it gives no cause for complaint. The remaining half of the town draws water from Fulwood, Westford and Payton springs and the Pitt Farm borehole. This is a hard water and much of it has an iron content near the permissible maximum. A few complaints have been made regarding the effect this water has on domestic fittings, and the number of occasions when the water is severely discoloured. Complaints have been referred to the Water Board and in November a long-term trial of a treatment of this water was commenced aimed at keeping the water below a Hazen Colour Value of 5°.

The tables below show that all houses except four now have a piped supply of district water, and negotiations are proceeding with a view to further improvement of this position. It will also be noted that 15 chemical samples of water have been examined and classed as satisfactory. These included six samples with the maximum amount of iron allowable, very slightly in excess of the acceptable maximum.

The unsatisfactory reports on well water all relate to the same property, and in this case the possibility of connection to a new district main is being investigated.

Details of the water supply and samples examined are set out below:-

	No. of houses	Population
District water supply	3,274	9,338
Well water supply	4	12
	3,278	9,350

Water Samples -

	Bacteriological examination	Chemical analysis
District water supply	21 satisfactory	15 satisfactory
Well water supply	2 satisfactory 3 unsatisfactory	-

SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND DRAINAGE.

The properties in the area, with a few exceptions which are referred to later in this section, drain to three sewage works, viz:-

Tone Sewage Works - this is the main works and previous reports have referred to their inadequacy.

Mitchells Pool Works - a small plant draining the South East area of the district.

Farthings Pitts - a very small plant for a small area to the South of the district.

The insufficiency of these sewage works has severely restricted development. This, along with the old, obsolete and defective condition of some sewers led, after much consideration and delay, to the acceptance of a scheme - in three phases - for the improvement of sewers and disposal works and good progress is now being made, the present position being -

Phase I - £245,000 contract for reconstruction and extension of sewerage - completed this year ahead of contract date.

Phase II - £850,955 contract to reconstruct and enlarge the Tone Sewage Works and abolish Mitchells Pool Works - commenced and proceeding well.

£144,781 contract for new sewers - commenced and proceeding ahead of contract date.

Phase III - £209,000 estimated cost for new sewers to follow on, on completion of Phase II.

Samples of sewage and trade effluents have been examined and reported upon as follows:-

Tone Works - 11 samples of sewage and effluent. Solids in suspension (parts per million) have ranged from 27 to 74 and B.O.D. from 7 to 76.

31 samples of sewage effluent after putting into operation temporary land irrigation system: solids in suspension (parts per million) have ranged from 1 to 26 and B.O.D. from 3 to 9.

Mitchells Pool Works - 10 samples of sewage effluent. Solids in suspension (parts per million) have ranged from 32 to 82 and B.O.D. from 18 to 82.

Trade Effluent - 11 samples from factory and 11 check samples from sewage works - all reported as having "no significant traces of pesticides".

In the first paragraph of this section I referred to premises not drained to the sewer. These are:-

61 houses drained to 52 septic tanks.

7 houses Tone Wharf discharging directly into the stream.

6 houses at Ditchford, Rockwell Green, where sink waste discharges directly into the stream.

By the 1st April 1972 the Council had approved a scheme for providing one free cleansing per year for cesspools and septic tanks, and had accepted a contract for the year. These free cleansings were satisfactorily carried out.

The drainage of Tone Wharf is still under negotiation with the owners with a view to pumping the sewage into an existing sewer, but decisions on design and the giving of instructions to proceed are extremely slow.

The six houses at Ditchford were affected by a proposed Clearance Area and as a result of the comments and decision of the Inspector of the Department of the Environment this sink waste still discharged into the stream. At a time when there is much emphasis on the improvement of the environment it is surprising to note that one of the Department's inspectors does not regard the discharge of sullage water direct into a stream as "any hazard to health".

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The collection and disposal of refuse is under the supervision of the Engineer's Department and is well organised and supervised within the limits approved by the Committee. There continues to be a weekly collection of domestic refuse, by the 'kerbside' system and a special collection of trade refuse, where requested, each Friday. Refuse storage is by approved dustbins, except for 200 houses on a new Council estate, where paper sacks are in use.

Previous reports have drawn attention to the unsatisfactory 'kerb side' system of refuse collection - a system which was denounced by the 'Report on Refuse Collection' prepared for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in 1967. With impending local government reorganisation there is little hope of securing a very early improvement of this system, which relies on the bin being placed on the kerb by the householder on the day of collection - this, among other objections to the system, relies on the sick, aged and infirm. Surely a new local authority cannot continue to operate this archaic system indefinitely.

The disposal of refuse is now by controlled tipping at Poole Brickworks, within the area of the Wellington Rural District. Negotiations are still proceeding regarding the use of this area by both the urban and rural districts and for the provision of pulverisation plant to deal with all domestic refuse tipped at this site.

VERMIN AND INSECTS.

There have been no problems this year under this heading, the worst case being a heavy and persistent infestation of a council house by silver fish, which was effectively treated by the Council's contractor.

The Council's scheme for the immediate treatment, free of charge, of domestic premises affected by wasps was successful. A total of 21 houses were treated, as against 33 the previous year.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

There are no offensive trade premises in the district.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

There are no premises in the area used or registered as Common Lodging Houses.

CARAVAN SITES AND CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT ACT 1960.

Two sites continue to be used for caravans:-

(a). Cadeside (adjoining A38) - Controlled by the Caravan Club - with accommodation for 60 touring caravans. This is well controlled and has caused no problems. It is largely used as a transit site.

(b). Pitt Farm Caravan Site (fronting A38) - This site is now used for 60 residential caravans, and there has been some slight amendment of the stands previously used for touring caravans. The site has a mixed use and a mixed population. Many of the vans have been on the site for long periods and are regarded as permanent homes by their owner/occupiers. A few itinerants use the site, but usually stay for periods of several months. During the year three defective caravans have been replaced with new caravans and in two cases owners of caravans in poor condition left the site, to be replaced by owners of caravans in a satisfactory state and one unauthorised tent was removed. All residents were issued with a circular advising on the proper treatment and storage of domestic refuse.

There is one case of overcrowding - in a problem family - which is proving difficult to abate.

Generally, whilst the site is well managed and the site owner co-operates with the department, there is an obvious need for regular and firm supervision.

One site licence for an individual caravan was approved for a period expiring 30th June 1974.

SWIMMING POOLS AND BATHS.

There are four swimming pools in the area -

(a). One privately owned and operated by a Swimming Club.

(b). Two pools supervised by the County Health Inspector on behalf of the Education Authority.

(c). One pool at a public school and supervised by the School Governors.

The private pool operated by a Swimming Club is an 'open air pool' with seasonal use, and a capacity of 65,625 gallons. Mains water is used and this is mechanically filtered and automatically chlorinated. Unfortunately the chlorination plant caused some trouble during the year and at times resulted in a low chlorine content in the water. During the season samples of pool water are regularly examined for bacterial content and regular checks are made for pH values and free chlorine. Details of samples during the year are set out below:-

Bacteriological examination

<u>No. of samples:</u>	28, all satisfactory.
<u>Tests for free chlorine:</u>	14 readings of 0 to 0.5 10 readings of 1.0 to 2.0 3 readings of 3.0
Total:	27.
<u>Tests for pH value:</u>	27 readings of 8.0 1 reading of 7.5
Total	28.

OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT 1963.

During the year there were seven new registrations and six premises were deleted from the records, so at the end of the year the premises registered were:-

Offices	31
Retail shops	55
Wholesale shops and warehouses ...	5
Catering establishments	3
Fuel storage depots	1

Total -	95
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A total of 19 special inspections were made during the year but no general inspections, and some 103 other inspections were made of registered premises for other reasons. The number of inspections, particularly general inspections, continues to be below a desired level. With a limited staff and pressure of other work there seems little hope of correcting this deficiency.

Contraventions noted and dealt with informally were -

Failure to register.

Inadequate heating of shop.

Lift defects - revealed on statutory examination.

Inadequate washing and drinking water facilities.

Inadequate sanitary accommodation.

One non-fatal accident reported was received and enquiry showed it to have arisen from a customer's child throwing apple bits onto the shop floor and the assistant falling on this before cleaning could take place.

SHOPS ACT 1950.

The Council continues to exercise powers, delegated by the Somerset County Council, under the provisions of this Act.

During the year 108 visits were made to shop premises. No contraventions were noted, no special action was required and the general requirements regarding hours of opening and closing, and half-day holidays were well observed.

One shop keeper was advised on hours of opening and closing.

FACTORIES ACT 1961.

At the end of the year 44 factories were on the register and five sites were in use for Building and Engineering Works - 26 inspections have been made of these premises and sites and three cases of defective sanitary accommodation dealt with, and two cases where there was a lack of accommodation on a building and engineering site.

The statutory statement required by Section 153(1) of the Act is in the annex at the end of this Report.

BAKEHOUSES.

There is one general bakehouse in the district and one small bakehouse with a very limited range of products. These premises have been satisfactorily maintained.

CLEAN AIR ACTS 1956/68.

One complaint of excessive smoke emission was received during the year and investigation showed this to be due to faulty adjustment, on shift change-over, of furnaces designed to utilize waste chippings and sawdust. Otherwise factory chimneys have not given any cause for concern.

There are no instruments in the district to record atmospheric pollution, but the general view is that this is a 'clean area'. No action has been taken to implement the provision for the control of domestic smoke. Whilst this is not the problem it is in many areas, it should be remembered that these provisions are available. It is discouraging for a resident to change over to smokeless fuel, only to find a nearby house still using bituminous coal, resulting in deposits of dirt and grime on his decorations and home surrounds.

In the provision of council houses the Council has recognised the need to use smokeless fuels and the last completed estate (201 houses at New Priory) are all electric. The Olands Meadow site, where 73 bungalows and houses are in the course of erection, will be either on gas or electric power. Consideration is being given to the improvement of some older council houses including the provision of central heating by either gas, electricity, oil or solid smokeless fuel. These are all steps towards cleaner air.

NOISE ABATEMENT.

The only complaints received were towards the end of the year when contractors started on the major reconstruction of the Tone Sewage Works. During the first few weeks nearby residents were affected by noise from diesel compressors used to generate power. These have now been discontinued and an electric cable provided to supply the power and light required.

MEAT INSPECTION.

There is now only one slaughterhouse licensed and whilst this is well maintained, it is not well sited and there is no room for desirable improvements. Slaughtering takes place one day per week and it has not been necessary to regulate their hours. There is 100% inspection of all animals slaughtered and the maximum inspection charges are made.

Details of the throughput are as follows:-

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	156	-	-	895	-
Number inspected	156	-	-	895	-
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci:</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	5	-	-	11	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculo- sis and cysticerci	2.8	-	-	1.3	-
<u>Tuberculosis only:</u>	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Cysticercosis:</u>					
<u>Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for:</u>					
(a) Tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Cysticercosis	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Other	122	-	-	47	-

FOOD CONDEMNED. (Other than meat at the slaughterhouse)

Cooked meat and meat products	1 cwt. 56 lbs.
Canned meat	1 "
Other canned food	13½ "
Fruit and vegetables	1 cwt. 38 "
Other foods	8 "
	<hr/>
	3 cwt. 4½ lbs.

FOOD POISONING OUTBREAKS.

No outbreaks of food poisoning have occurred in the district during the year under review.

FOOD.

The supervision of food supplies is a most important part of the duties of this department, particularly as the food distributive trade is far in excess of the needs of the area. Residents of many adjoining districts shop in Wellington for food.

Details of special premises are set out below along with comments on food complaints and action taken. This work resulted in 105 inspections of the various premises.

(a) Milk and Dairies Regulations -

Registered distributors of milk	16
Registered dairy premises (other than farms)	6

(b) Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1970 -

Premises complying with Regulation 18	71
Premises complying with Regulation 19	40

(c) Food and Drugs Act 1955 -

Premises registered - Section 16 - Ice Cream	56
Premises registered - Section 16 - Cooked Meats etc.	7

Some 15 contraventions of the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1970 were noted and dealt with by informal action, and the number of complaints of unsatisfactory food was 16 compared with 13 in 1971. All these complaints were carefully investigated and dealt with by warnings where appropriate. No legal proceedings were considered necessary. Brief details of these complaints are set out below:-

(a) Bread - small piece of metal embedded in crust - referred to County Trading Standards Department.

(b) Prawn Omelette - take away meal - prawns alleged to be discoloured - complaint and specimen too old when received to justify positive action.

(c) Milk - contaminated by paraffin due to use of unsatisfactory bottle - warned dairy.

(d) Limeade - strong smell and contained bits - probably due to over concentration of flavouring.

(e) Custard Tart - alleged to be contaminated with mouse droppings - evidence not conclusive and specimen old when received. Bakery warned.

(f) Crunchy Peanut Butter - alleged to taste mouldy. Not sufficiently confirmed to take action.

(g) Honey - alleged excess of added sugar - not confirmed.

(h) Bread - piece of metal in loaf. Referred to County Trading Standards Department.

(i) Milk - dirty bottle - traces of cement inside bottle - dairy warned.

(j) Skinless Sausages - Slight mould on sausages - due to failure to rotate stock and lack of clear coding by makers of sausages - warnings to makers, shop and assistant responsible for sale.

(k) Boneless Hock Joint - unfit at centre - due to sale of piece of bacon pierced by hanging hook - warning to shop.

(l) Tinned Spaghetti - alleged sickness after consumption of meal - tin and food remnants examined - food poisoning organisms.

(m) Fried Fish - complaint of odour - could not be properly investigated due to delay in making complaint.

(n) Tongue Roll with Turkey - alleged slight odour confirmed - manufacturer warned.

(o) Cod fillets - strong smell - confirmed but not identified.

(p) Fish Fingers - pale, starchy and no resemblance to fish. Probably due to prolonged cold storage - makers warned.

The investigation of these complaints has been with the fullest possible assistance from the County Analyst's Department and I desire to express my appreciation to Miss Joan D. Peden and her staff.

POULTRY PROCESSING PREMISES.

There are no processing plants within the district boundaries.

TUBERCULOSIS ORDER.

No cows were slaughtered under this Order during the year.

HOUSING.

Council Houses - Work commenced early in the year on the development of the Olands Meadow site to provide 58 aged persons bungalows and 15 houses (73 housing units) and by the end of the year good progress was being made. Eight bungalows had been completed and the whole contract should be complete by mid-1973.

Work on re-roofing, including underfelt, of 132 council houses was well in hand and schemes are being considered to further improve and provide central heating in some of the older council houses.

Private Houses - Only five new private houses were completed during the year, but 1973 should see a substantial improvement in this sector. With the progress on new sewerage and the reconstruction of the sewage works planning permission has been secured for further development.

Houses Gained or Lost - During the year one house was demolished and seven houses closed, making a total of eight units lost. The closures are of a temporary character to allow for reconstruction and improvement. Against this four units have been gained due to improvements and cancellation of Closing Orders and a conversion of stables to a dwelling house.

The overall loss was four housing units.

The following table is required by the Department of the Environment:

(a) Number of houses which on inspection were considered to be unfit for human habitation	16
(b) Number of houses, the defects in which were remedied in consequence of informal action by local authority or their officer	11
(c) Number of Representations made to local authority with a view to:	
(1) Serving of Notices requiring execution of works	-
(2) Making of Demolition or Closing Orders	10
(d) Number of Informal Notices served requiring execution of works	10
(e) Number of houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notice	4
(f) Number of Demolition or Closing Orders made	1
(g) Number of houses in respect of which an Undertaking was accepted under sub-section (4) of Section 16 of the Housing Act 1957	5
(h) Number of houses demolished	7

The last report referred to the difficulties which had arisen in the Council's endeavour to implement the programme approved for dealing with unfit and sub-standard property, following the request made by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in Circular No. 92/69. The position, as in other parts of the country, has been further complicated by the astronomical increase in the prices being paid for unfit and sub-standard properties. This has resulted in much uncertainty as to what action should be taken in respect of unfit properties and the policy which has emerged can only be described as "make do and mend".

Whilst the Council was in an uncertain state, the Department of the Environment issued Circular No. 50/72. Recent changes in staff, the lack of any systematic record of older housing stock and personal knowledge of the district, made it impossible to comply with the Department's request with any degree of accuracy. Nor was it possible with one Inspector (and assistance only for typing letters and reports) to make a survey or partial survey of the area. Unfortunately, as a result, the return in question has not been submitted. This has not deterred reasonable progress in securing the improvement of older housing stock, an example being the substantial increase in Improvement and Standard Grants - valued at almost £32,000. Many other efforts have been made to secure the

clearance or substantial improvement of unfit houses as will be noted from the brief case summary set out below:-

Clearance Area No. 1/71.

Nos. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 19, Rockwell Green

This is the area not confirmed by the Department of the Environment and referred to in the last report. The Council is still waiting for the improvements promised by the owners. The final proposals were a long way from completion at the end of the year.

Nos. 16 - 23, Eight Acre Lane

These are to be improved by agreement with the owners to form two small cottages and two large cottages by three conversions of two cottages into one. Work on No. 23 was almost complete by the end of the year and the occupiers of Nos. 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 had been rehoused by the Council to enable the conversions to proceed.

Nos. 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17 and 18 Improvement Place

These houses were included in the programme for action by Clearance Area procedure. Following inspections and detailed reports the Committee held a meeting of the owners - many being elderly owner/occupiers with a real desire to retain the existing accommodation - and decided to accept proposals to raise to Standard Grant conditions. By the end of the year No. 13 was subject to a Closing Order; Nos. 4,5,6,14,17 and 18 were subject to Undertakings to improve when they became unoccupied; No. 15 had been improved and Nos. 7 and 8 had been accepted in their present condition. Negotiations are proceeding in respect of the remaining houses.

Nos. 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 Trinity Row

Work to repair and improve to Standard Grant conditions was nearing completion at the end of the year.

Nos. 38 - 51 Acre Cottages

It was agreed by the Council that this row should be retained and raised to Standard Grant conditions. By the end of the year all the houses except three had been raised to the agreed standard.

Riverside

It was agreed that no action should be taken, but an endeavour made to raise them to Standard Grant conditions. There are 30 houses in this area. At the end of the year only nine of these houses were below the desired standard.

The Well and Rockwell Green Area

This is one of the most difficult areas for the Council to deal with. It includes 19 houses, most of which are unfit, spread over a rather large area and some are inaccessible for vehicular traffic. Several reports have been considered and at present a decision has been deferred pending the submission of proposals as to how the area could be re-developed.

The position regarding individual unfit houses is:-

11 are subject to Undertakings to improve when they become unoccupied.

5 are closed or subject to Closing Orders.

6 Closing Orders have been cancelled following major reconstruction work.

7 demolished and sites being re-developed.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>
Applications received	14	19	29
Applications approved	10	21	29
Applications refused	-	1	-
Applications withdrawn	-	1	-
Applications awaiting decision	4	-	-
Value of Grants approved	£8,341	£14,640	£27,281

STANDARD GRANTS.

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>
Applications received	24	21	24
Applications approved	22	19	23
Applications refused	1	-	1
Applications withdrawn	1	-	-
Applications awaiting decision	-	2	-
Value of Grants approved	£4,426	£3,867	£4,432

The increase in the applications for Grants has been maintained, a total of 52 Improvement and Standard Grants being approved, compared with 40 the previous year.

The value of these Grants amounted to £31,713 compared with £18,507 for the previous year.

The Improvement Grants approved include for the reconditioning of one house subject to a Closing Order, for the conversion of an old bakehouse and stables into a house, for the conversion of one large house into three separate units and for the conversion of a block of disused shops, offices and warehouses into 14 flats.

The Standard Grants include two extended Grants to allow for extensions to provide bathrooms.

There were no applications for Special Grants.

QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATES.

Section 44(2)

No applications were received during 1972.

Section 44(1)

Seven applications were received, six Qualification Certificates issued and one application refused.

RODENT CONTROL.

The arrangement to employ a private contractor has continued. Under this contract all Council premises are regularly examined and treated as required, and the arrangement has kept these premises free from serious infestation. The contract also provides for an examination and report twice-yearly on all farm premises and pig swill boilers.

Sewer manholes have been baited as recommended by the appropriate Ministry. The last treatment in the Spring involved the baiting of 52 manholes, There were no takes and as a result the Autumn "follow up" treatment was not undertaken.

The number of complaints received totalled 49, all of which were investigated. Of these 26 were confirmed as minor infestations and appropriate action taken. These included 21 cases of rat infestation and five cases of mouse infestation.

There has been no evidence of Warfarin resistance.

ANNEX

FACTORIES ACT 1961

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes of provisions as to health:-

Premises	Number on Register	N U M B E R O F		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Prose- cutions
(i) Factpries in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	--	-	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	44	22	3	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	5	4	2	-
TOTAL	49	26	5	-

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found:-

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			to H.M. Inspector	by H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness Sect. 1	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding Sect. 2	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable Temperature Sect. 3	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate Ventilation Sect. 4	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors Sect. 6	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences Sect. 7					
(a) Insufficient	2	1	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or Defective	3	2	-	3	-
(c) Not separate for Sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other Offences against the Act	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	5	3	-	3	-

3. OUTWORK (SECTION 133)

Total No. of Outworkers in August list	68
<u>Nature of Work</u> - Making etc., washing and cleaning wearing apparel ...	25
Furniture and upholstery	4
The making of boxes or other receptacles or parts thereof made wholly or partially of paper	24
Textile weaving	15

